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WELLS RESOURCE AREA

WILDERNESS STUDY REPORT

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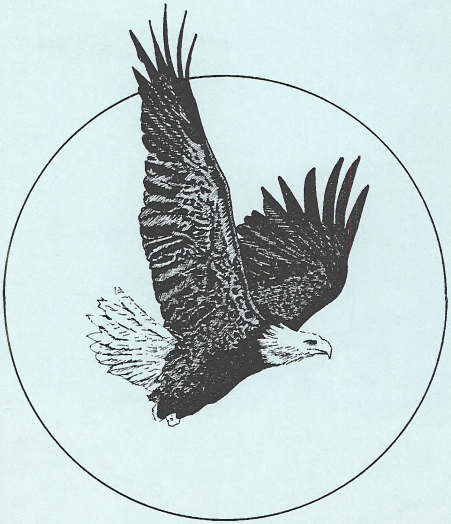
Elko, Nevada



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WELLS RESOURCE AREA, NEVADA

WILDERNESS STUDY REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Recommendation

Wilderness Study Overview..... 1

Summary of Public Comments..... 3

Summary Analysis of WSA Recommendations

Bluebell..... 6
Goshute Peak.....15
South Pequop.....25
Bad Lands.....34

Impacts by WSA and Alternative.....43

RECOMMENDATION

This report contains the results of the Bureau of Land Management's review of Four Wilderness Study Areas in eastern Elko County, Nevada. Based upon multiple resource analysis and public involvement, we have concluded that approximately 16,070 acres within these wilderness study areas are not suitable for preservation as wilderness and should be released by Congress for uses other than wilderness. These nonsuitable areas are listed below and are shown on maps in this report.

Area	Nonsuitable Acres BLM	Preliminarily Suitable Acres BLM
Bluebell (NV-010-027)	7,357	48,308
Goshute Peak (NV-010-033)	4,185	65,585
South Pequop (NV-010-035)	3,517	37,573
Bad Lands (NV-010-184)	1,011	8,415
TOTALS	16,070	159,881

We are making no recommendation with respect to those lands preliminarily found suitable for preservation as wilderness, as those areas are now undergoing further consideration, which includes mineral surveys being conducted by the Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines. Recommendations will be transmitted at a later date, when mineral surveys have been completed.

This report contains the results of our analysis to date on both the nonsuitable and the preliminarily suitable areas in order to give as complete a picture as possible of all the lands reviewed in this wilderness study.

This report satisfies the requirement for a Record of Decision under the regulations 40 CFR 1505. An environmental impact statement accompanies the report.

_____ _____

Nevada State Director DATE
Bureau of Land Management

_____ _____

Director DATE
Bureau of Land Management

_____ _____

Secretary of the Interior DATE

WILDERNESS STUDY OVERVIEW

This wilderness study report involves four Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) totalling 175,951 acres. These areas are within the Wells Resource Area of the Elko District located in northeastern Nevada (see Wells Planning Area and WSA Location Maps). These four WSAs were studied and evaluated through the Draft Wells Resource Area Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement published April 25, 1983, using the criteria developed in the BLM's Wilderness Study Policy.

Four alternatives were considered for each WSA: (1) Resource Protection (All Wilderness) Alternative; (2) Midrange or Preferred Alternative; (3) Resource Production Alternative; (4) No Action (No Wilderness) Alternative. The Resource Protection Alternative identified the WSAs in their entirety as suitable for wilderness designation. The No Action Alternative identified the WSAs in their entirety as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. The Midrange or Preferred Alternative divided the WSAs between suitable and nonsuitable on the basis of deliniating wilderness boundaries that eliminate resource conflicts and are more manageable than original WSA boundaries. The Resource Production Alternative divided the WSAs between suitable and nonsuitable on the basis or resolving resource conflicts, even nonsignificant ones.

The cumulative impacts of the Preferred Alternative are summarized as follows:

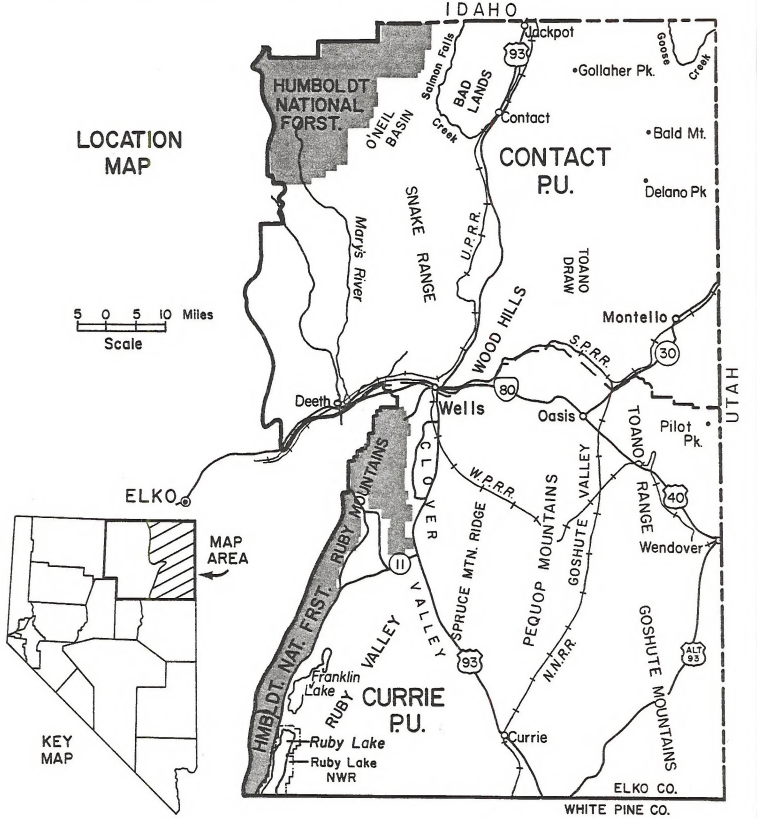
In the 159,881 acres preliminarily recommended as suitable for wilderness, all of these acres would be withdrawn from mineral entry; these lands have low potential for all minerals with the exception of 21,750 acres that have good potential for either metallics and nonmetallics or phosphates. Opportunities for increasing the resource area Christmas tree harvest by 45 percent would be foregone with wilderness designation. Beneficial impacts include the preservation of wilderness values, wildlife habitat, and cultural and visual resources, recreation opportunities and special features.

In the 16,070 acres recommended an nonsuitable for wilderness, mineral exploration and development, woodland harvest, and off-road vehicle use could cause significant impairment of wilderness values, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, wildlife habitat, cultural and visual resources, and degradation of soil, water and air.

TABLE 1. Lands Within Wilderness Study Area Boundaries

Unit No.	Name	Acres BLM	Acres Private	Gross Total
NV-010-027	Bluebell	55,665	0	55,665
NV-010-033	Goshute Peak	69,770	0	69,770
NV-010-035	South Pequop	41,090	0	41,090
NV-010-184	Bad Lands	9,426	0	9,426
TOTALS		175,951	0	175,951

WELLS PLANNING AREA
ELKO DISTRICT NEVADA



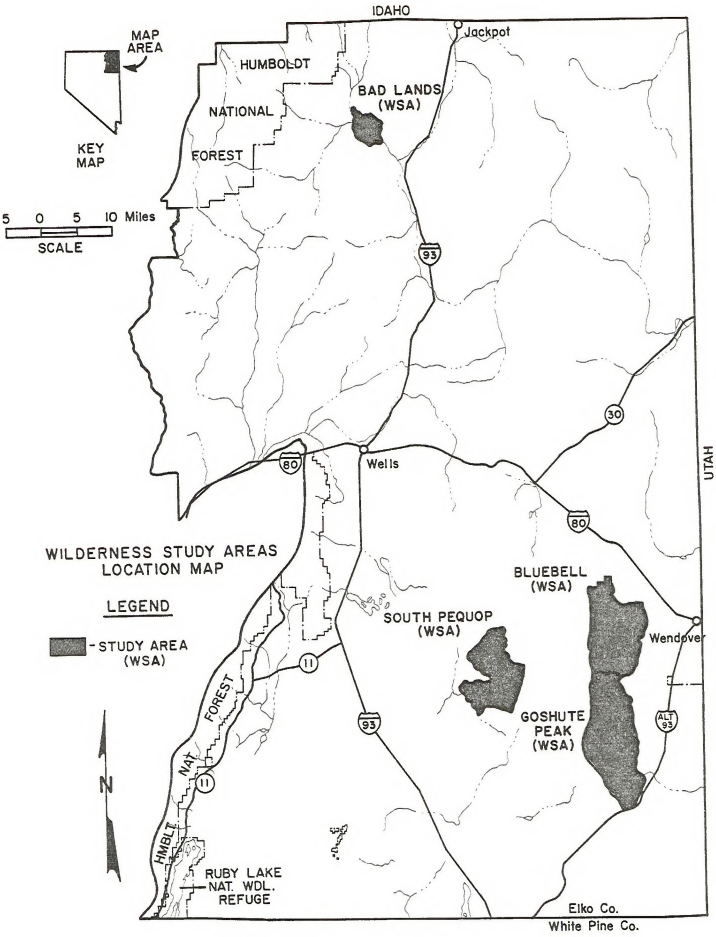

IDAHO
MAP AREA
KEY MAP
HUMBOLDT
NATIONAL
FOREST
BAD LANDS (WSA)
Jackpot
5 0 5 10 Miles
SCALE
93
30
80
Wells
UTAH
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS LOCATION MAP
LEGEND
- STUDY AREA (WSA)
BLUEBELL (WSA)
SOUTH PEQUOP (WSA)
Wendover
11
93
GOSHUTE PEAK (WSA)
ALT 93
N
HUMBOLDT NAT. FOREST
RUBY LAKE NAT. WDL. REFUGE
Elko Co.
White Pine Co.

TABLE 2. Recommendations

Unit No.	Name	Within Preliminarily Suitable Boundary: Acres BLM	Acres Private	Gross Total	Within Nonsuitable Boundary: Acres BLM	Acres Private	Gross Total
027	Bluebell	48,308	0	48,308	7,357	0	7,357
033	Goshute Peak	65,585	0	65,585	4,185	0	4,185
035	South Pequop	37,573	0	37,573	3,517	0	3,517
184	Bad Lands	8,415	0	8,415	1,011	0	1,011
TOTALS		159,881	0	159,881	16,070	0	16,070

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

A total of 50 comments were submitted, both oral and written, on the Draft Wells Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement during the 90-day public comment period which ended August 19, 1983. Formal public hearings were held on June 20, 1983 in Reno, Nevada and June 21, 1983 in Wells, Nevada. The hearings began at 7:00 p.m. and were announced through news releases, personal communication, and in the Federal Register.

Approximately one-tenth of the comments received requested that additional lands be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The primary rationale for these comments was that the Elko District Wilderness Inventory was too restrictive in selecting WSAs for review and that all four WSAs should be recommended suitable in their entirety.

Approximately four-tenths of the comments received stated that none of the WSAs should be recommended for wilderness designation. The majority of these comments stated that livestock grazing or that mineral exploration or development would be impacts or prevented by wilderness designation and that the lands should be recommended nonsuitable for designation as wilderness.

Public comments on specific WSAs will be summarized in the following sections of this report entitled, "Summary Analysis of WSA Recomendations."

TABLE 3. Public Comment Summary

	Total Comments Received	Supports More Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports Less Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative
Oral	16	2	5	1
Written	38	2	5	23
TOTALS	54	4	10	24

BLUEBELL WSA

1. NV-010-027, Bluebell, 55,665 Acres

2. Recommendation and Rationale

a. Approximately 48,308 acres are recommended preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation while 7,357 acres are recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Those lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Areas "E, G, H" shown on Bluebell Alternatives Map) are on the periphery of the WSA. Removing these lands from the recommended preliminary suitable area would reduce potential future conflicts with private lands adjacent to the WSA. In addition, non-designation of these lands would eliminate future potential conflicts associated with woodland harvest in the northern end of the WSA, conflicts with minerals, vehicle use and motorized camping.

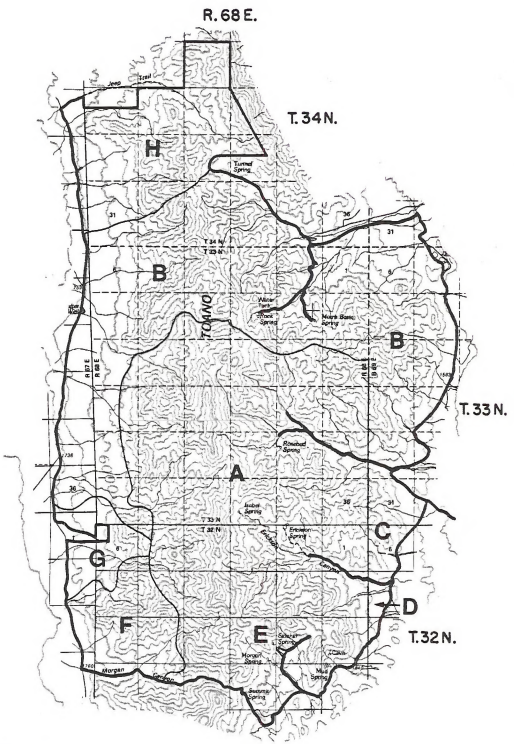
Areas "A, B, C, D, and F" (shown on Bluebell Alternatives Map) are recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation and include the majority of the northern portion of the Goshute Mountains, an extremely rugged and scenic mountain range. This mountainous area contains varied drainages extending into it's interior. Elevations range from 5,300 feet to over 8,000 feet along the ridgeline.

Vegetative cover throughout the study area is provided by juniper, mountain mahogany, white fir, pinyon, and scatterings of limber and bristlecone pine. Sagebrush and various grasses cover much of the lower elevations. White fir, limber and bristlecone pine, considered unique woodland species, are primarily found at higher elevations.

Areas "A, B, C, D, and F" are manageable as wilderness due primarily to the extreme ruggedness and relative isolation of canyons from each other. The steepness and dense woodland cover of the canyons tend to screen most activities or visitors from other activities or visitors in or adjacent to these areas. Additionally, these areas are manageable as wilderness due to the low probability of nonconforming but allowable uses occurring in the WSA.

These lands offer outstanding viewpoints of the Salt Flats to the east and several scenic mountain ranges to the north and west.

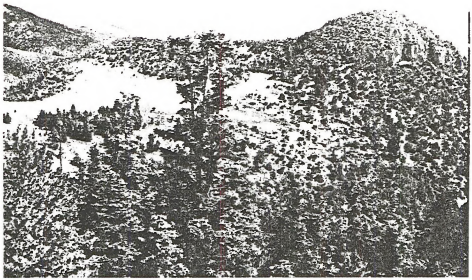
Wilderness designation of areas "A, B, C, D, and F" would maintain the wilderness values, special features, wildlife habitat, cultural and visual resources, unique woodland species and watersheds which would otherwise degrade without designation.



ALTERNATIVE	SUITABLE	NON-SUITABLE
No Action	None	All
Resource Production	A	B, C, D, E, F, G, H
Mid-Range	A,B,C,D,F	E,G,H
Resource Protection	A,B,C,D,F,G,H	E
Preferred	A,B,C,D,F	E,G,H

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA(WSA)
BLUEBELL NV-010-027

View of Bluebell WSA from Morgan Pass.



View of basin area from ridgeline in Goshute Peak WSA.

3. General Description of the WSA

a. Location. Bluebell WSA is located in southeastern Elko County, 10 miles southwest of West Wendover, Nevada.

b. Boundaries. The WSA is generally oblong in shape, measuring 13 miles north-south and from one to eight miles east-west. The boundary generally follows a loop road with four cherrystem roads penetrating the WSA (see Bluebell Alternatives Map).

c. General Environment. Bluebell WSA consists of steep, mountainous topography, with numerous canyons radiating from the central ridgeline of mountain peaks. At lower elevations, the area supports a pinyon-juniper ecosystem while small stands of mixed conifer forest can be found in the higher elevations (e.g. bristlecone and limber pine).

4. Application of Wilderness Planning Criteria and Quality Standards

a. Criterion No. 1 - Evaluation of Wilderness Values

(1) Quality of the Area's Mandatory Wilderness Characteristics

Naturalness:

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Within the boundaries of the Bluebell WSA are approximately twenty miles of vehicle ways, ten small earthen reservoirs, four corrals, a mile long fence, and two developed springs. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the canyons adjacent to existing roads. The reservoirs are found along vehicle ways on the west side of the study area. The four corrals, the fence and the two developed springs are located adjacent existing roads. Total acreage involved is approximately thirty acres. While these imprints are within the WSA, the area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Solitude:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude were determined to exist on the basis of the size and configuration of the area, natural screening (both vegetative and topographic), and the ability of a user to find a secluded spot.

The WSA is extremely rugged, with high mountain peaks and numerous drainages. This highly dissected topography provides numerous opportunities for solitude. The majority of the WSA is densely wooded, which creates a feeling of total seclusion.

Because of the excellent topographic and vegetative screening, there are many areas where people can find a secluded spot throughout the WSA. This is particularly true in the major drainages such as West Morris, Morris, Morgan Basin, Thirty-mile, Johnson, Rosebud, and Erickson Canyons.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The Bluebell WSA, with its relatively large size and varied topography, contains outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation experience. The majority of the WSA allows for unconfined freedom of movement due to the many drainages, ridges and peaks.

Activities available in the WSA include backpacking/camping, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation, sight-seeing/photography, rock climbing, and fossil collecting. Primitive recreation opportunities are outstanding in the WSA.

(2) Special Features

The Goshute Mountains (Bluebell and Goshute Peak WSAs) are the location of an annual southern migration from late August to mid-October of thousands of raptors. Birds known to migrate through the area include golden and bald eagles, redtailed hawks, goshawks, American kestrels and Cooper's hawks. Steve Hoffman, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has trapped and observed raptors in the Goshute Mountains for the past four years and feels that the area is the most productive ridge site for raptor migrations in the West.

The area is also historical range for bighorn sheep. Studies are currently in progress by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) to evaluate the reintroduction potential of this area.

Fossils are generally invertebrates, with a large variety of brachiopods, corals, bryozoans, and trilobites to be found. Several rare and unusual fossil species occur in the WSA.

Because of the limestone within the mountains, it is believed there are caves within the WSA. A few shelters have been found but no caves have been discovered.

The WSA has a long history of human occupation, as is indicated by the excavation of Danger Cave at Wendover, Utah. This shelter is one of the major archaeological sites excavated in the Great Basin. The earliest occupation was Carbon 14 dated to 10,200 year B.P. Occupation continued almost continuously up to the historic period.

The earliest occupants of this area were probably big game hunters who exploited the now extinct megafauna such as mammoth, giant bison, and camels. The evidence for these hunters' presence is based on two possible Folsom points recovered from Danger Cave.

Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available in the WSA.

Of interest also are the bristlecone pine (Pinus aristata) found in the WSA. They are the same as those found in the Wheeler Peak Scenic Area near Ely, Nevada, but are younger and smaller. These unique trees greatly enhance the visitor's experience because of their age and general appearance. The variety of plants and animals in the WSA are also of educational value.

Wild and free roaming horses are present within the WSA. The Blubell WSA forms the northern portion of the Goshute Mountains Wild Horse Herd Management Area.

(3) Multiple Resource Benefits (benefits to other multiple resource values which wilderness designation of the area would ensure)

Wilderness designation of this WSA would ensure benefits to soil, watershed, vegetation and wildlife habitat by preventing the impacts of new surface disturbing activities such as ORV use, woodland harvest, and mineral exploration and development. Wilderness designation would also ensure the following: preservation of natural and scenic vistas within the WSA; cultural resources would generally receive added resource protection; wildlife and wild horses would receive less harassment from motor vehicles; the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be maintained or enhanced over the long-term.

(4) Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System

a. Expanding the diversity of natural systems and features, as represented by ecosystems and landforms:

Wilderness designation of this WSA would not add a new ecosystem or landform to the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). However, the NWPS is only slightly represented in California; Forest Service lands designated as wilderness include 43,168 acres of pinyon-juniper woodland.

b. Expanding the opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation within a day's driving time (five hours) of major population centers:

The Bluebell WSA is within a day's driving time of one major population center (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas of 100,000 people or more) Salt Lake (Metro.), Utah. There are currently two designated wilderness areas and 26 areas administratively endorsed as wilderness within one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA. Additionally, there are several areas within approximately one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA that are scheduled to be studied for possible inclusion into the NWPS.

c. Balancing the geographic distribution:

The Jarbidge Wilderness Area, located in northeastern Nevada, is the only area in Nevada designated as wilderness. The Jarbidge Wilderness Area totals 64,830 acres or .11 percent of Nevada federal lands. Currently, there are less than 8 million acres in Nevada under consideration for wilderness designation as either administratively endorsed as suitable or for further planning. This represents approximately 13.3 percent of the total federal lands in Nevada.

b. Criterion No. 2: Manageability

The portions of the WSA preliminarily recommended as suitable for wilderness (Areas "A, B, C, D, and F") are capable of being managed as wilderness. Areas "E, G, and H" were considered unmanageable (See Bluebell Alternatives Map). The BLM has concluded that areas "A, B, C, D, and F" are manageable for the following reasons. There are very few conflicts with other resource values in these areas. Additionally, the topography of these areas is rugged and limits access. Some mineral development or unauthorized woodland harvest could be a management problem, but it is possible such developments will never take place.

Area "E" is a small area surrounded by a cherrystem road. Area "G" may not be manageable as wilderness due to its fairly flat terrain and high potential for metallic and nonmetallic minerals. Area "H" is unmanageable due to its proximity to private land and its historic use by woodcutters.

c. Quality Standards

(1) Energy and Mineral Resource Values.

Even if the entire WSA were designated as wilderness, this could cause an insignificant impact on energy and mineral resource development. The possibility of impacts would be reduced if areas "A, B, C, D, and F" were designated, as preliminarily recommended in this report. Mining would be allowed on existing claims pending a validity exam which indicates that a valid discovery exists. New claim location and assessment work would be prohibited; development would be curtailed. Adverse economic impacts could occur, but they would not be significant except to those directly affected.

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would withdraw 55,665 acres from appropriation under the mining laws from mineral leasing on the date of designation. There are approximately 40 mining claims in the WSA covering approximatley 800 acres. There are nine oil and gas leases covering approximately 9,600 acres of the study area. There are no geothermal or other leases in the WSA.

Available data indicates that the Bluebell WSA has relatively small areas of high and good locatable mineral potential, with most of the WSA having low mineral potential (see EIS mineral potential map for the Bluebell WSA and the Table below).

Bluebell WSA Mineral Potential Acres

	Potential		
	High(3)	Good (2)	Low (1)
Minerals (M)	900	4,000	50,765
Phosphates (P)	0	900	54,765
Oil & Gas (OG)	0	0	55,665
Geothermal (G)	0	0	55,665

Source: Draft Gem Assessment 1983.

Mineral potential has been estimated on the basis of the Wells Mineral Resources Inventory, company responses to request for input, field work, available literature, and the GEM Assessment for the WSA.

The proposed action would reduce potential impacts to minerals by reducing the number of mining claims by 21, deleting all of the high and 1,050 acres with good mineral potential, and deleting 3,000 acres leased for oil and gas from the WSA.

Small high grade barite deposits occur along a range-front fault on the west side of the study area. An old maganese mine in the Decoy Mining District is located along this faultline, indicating a possibility of mineralization at depth. Mineral Resource Inventroy (MRI) rock analyses show anomalous concentrations of barite, maganese, vandium, and zinc in the Decoy Mining District.

(2) Impacts on Other Resources: The extent to which other resource values or uses would be foregone or adversely affected as a result of wilderness designation.

Wilderness designation of the entire Bluebell WSA, or any part of it, would cause no significant adverse impacts on watershed, soil, air, recreation, wild horses, wildlife, cultural or visual resources; these resources would be beneficially impacted with wilderness designation (see Impacts Table for WSA at the end of this report).

Woodland Products - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause adverse impacts to woodland products. The opportunity to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells Resource Area by 17 percent would be foregone with wilderness designation and is a significant adverse impact.

Livestock Grazing - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause few adverse impacts on livestock grazing. Portions of the area are currently grazed by livestock under BLM permit,

but no range improvements are proposed and very few motor vehicles are used within the WSA to manage livestock. Due to the lack of water and rugged terrain of the WSA, the potential for future range improvements is low.

Wilderness designation of the 48,308 acres recommended as preliminarily suitable would cause insignificant adverse impacts to woodland products and livestock grazing. The opportunity to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells Resource Area by 14 percent would be foregone. Impacts to livestock grazing would result in slight increased costs of operations (see the Impact Table at the end of this report) in areas recommended preliminary suitable.

(3) Impact of Nondesignation on Wilderness Values.

If the entire Bluebell WSA is not designated as wilderness, 55,665 acres would remain open to mineral entry and ORV use, resulting in exploration and development activities, with associated road construction, woodland removal, and surface disturbance. These activities would impair the naturalness and the outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, leading to a decrease in recreational opportunities in the WSA for nonmotorized forms of recreation. Additionally, nondesignation of the WSA would adversely impact special features and multiple resource benefits found in the WSA.

If areas "A, B, C, D, and F" are designated as wilderness (as recommended in this report) only 7,357 acres would remain open to mineral entry and ORV use and there would be much less impact on naturalness or on opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Impacts on special features and multiple resource benefits would also be reduced.

(4) Public Comments: (This standard is covered in Section 6 below).

(5) Local Social and Economic Effects:

Wilderness designation would preserve opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There would be a small benefit to service sector businesses in the local area due to purchases made from wilderness visitors, but it would not be significant.

Individuals in mining may be adversely impacted by increased costs and foregone employment, income and profits by all of the alternatives except the No Action Alternative.

The employment and income of Elko County would not be significantly impacted by any of the alternatives.

5. WSA Alternatives

a. Four alternatives were analyzed for Bluebell WSA in the Draft EIS:

Resource Protection - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA (55,665 acres).

Midrange or Preferred - Wilderness designation of 48,308 acres - all of the WSA except those lands on the southwest and northern portions which (peripheral areas) are considered unmanageable.

Resource Production - Wilderness designation of 25,830 acres - only the main ridge core area of the WSA is recommended preliminarily suitable.

No Action - Wilderness designation of none of the WSA.

The environmental impacts of these alternatives are displayed in the table at the end of this report.

b. The environmentally preferrable alternative is the Resource Protection Alternative.

c. The BLM's Preferred Alternative is the Midrange Alternative. In its selection, all practical means to avoid environmental impacts and reduce significant conflicts have been adopted.

d. To mitigate impacts in the lands not designated as wilderness, after Congress has acted, the BLM will manage mining activities under the regulations 43 CFR 3809 to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation. A wilderness management plan will be developed and implemented to minimize any impacts within the wilderness.

6. Summary of WSA - Specific Public Comments

a. During the inventory phase some comments were received which dealt with other resource values and potential resource conflicts. Comments opposing the classification of Bluebell as a WSA are as follows: (1) because it was roaded, (2) it was unnatural, (1) it lacked solitude (1) it lacked prmitive recreation opportunities, and (2) that other resource values (minerals) outweighed wilderness values. Comments supporting WSA classification are as follows: (2) it was roadless, (3) it was natural, (7) it had solitude, (8) it had primitive recreation opportunities, and (4) it had supplemental values (i.e. wild horses and bristlecone pines). The Department of the Air Force supported the WSA classification if specific provisions allow for overflights above and adjacent to the area.

b. A series of public meetings and public hearings were held in association with the study phase and draft environmental impact statement for the WSAs within the Wells Resource Area. These meetings were a combination workshop and scoping meeting and were held in Elko, Wells and Reno, Nevada. Formal public hearings were alter held in Reno, Nevada and Wells, Nevada.

A total of 50 comments were received, both oral and written (Table 4).

Table 4. Public Comment Summary - Bluebell WSA

	Total Comments Received	Supports More Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports Less Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative
Oral	13	2	5	1
Written	37	2	5	22
TOTALS	50	4	10	23

c. County: No comments pertaining to wilderness were received from county agencies or officials.

State: Comments were received from the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. The Nevada Department of Wildlife's comment supported the BLM's Preferred Alternative. The Nevada Department of Agriculture's comment said "Implement the No Action Alternative. These lands should not be managed as wilderness until they are finally declared wilderness."

Federal: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated the final EIS should clarify what interim management measures will be in effect during the wilderness classification process. Additionally, the final EIS should clarify if off-road vehicle use in the WSAs prior to designation would affect the potential wilderness status of the WSAs and whether access for mining, oil and gas exploration of other development will be allowed during the wilderness designation process. The EPA also stated that the FEIS should discuss how USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral surveys will be used to modify the areas identified as suitable.

The Air Force stated they support alternatives that do not restrict military overflights.

GOSHUTE PEAK WSA

1. NV-010-033, Goshute Peak, 69,770 Acres.

2. Recommendation and Rationale.

a. Approximately 65,585 acres are recommended preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation while 4,185 acres are recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Those lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Area "C" shown on Goshute Peak Alternatives Map) are on the periphery of the WSA. Removing these lands from the recommended preliminarily suitable area would reduce potential future conflicts with existing rights-of-way located within the southeast portion of the WSA. In addition, conflicts with unmanageable ORV use on substantially noticeable ways and good mineral potential would be reduced.

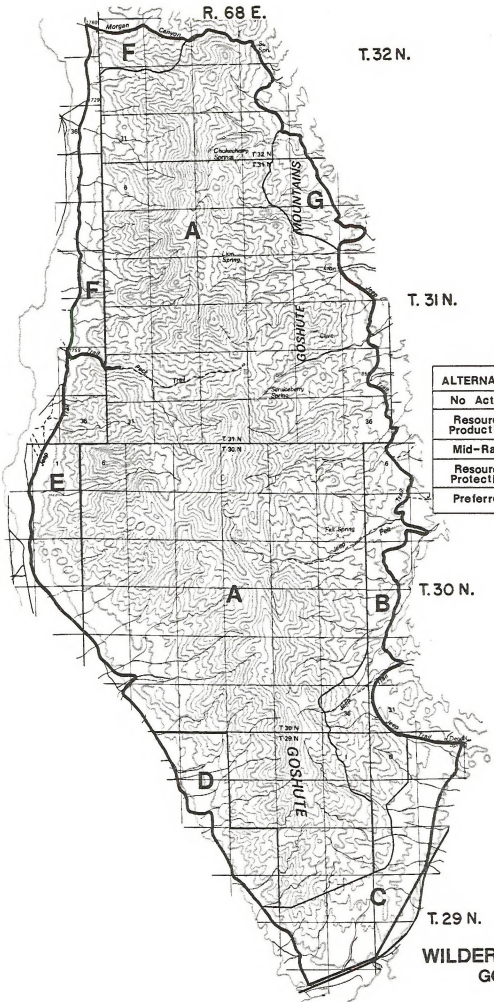
Areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G" (shown on Goshute Peak Alternatives Map) are recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation and include the majority of the southern portion of the Goshute Mountains, an extremely rugged and scenic mountain range. This mountainous area contains varied drainages to the east and rugged cliffs and canyons to the west. Elevations range from 6,000 feet to over 9,500 feet along the ridgeline and on Goshute Peak.

Vegetative cover throughout the study area is dense and consists of juniper, mountain mahogany, white fir, and pinyon, limber and bristlecone pine. Sagebrush and various grasses cover much of the lower elevations. White fir, limber and bristlecone pine (considered unique woodland species), are primarily found in scattered stands at higher elevations.

Areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G" are manageable as wilderness due to their extreme ruggedness and relative isolation of canyons from each other. The steepness and dense woodland cover of the canyons and ridges tend to screen most activities or visitors from other activities or visitors in or adjacent to these areas. Additionally, these areas are manageable as wilderness due to the low probability of nonconforming but allowable uses occurring in the WSA.

These lands offer outstanding viewpoints of the Salt Flats to the east and several scenic mountain ranges to the north and west.

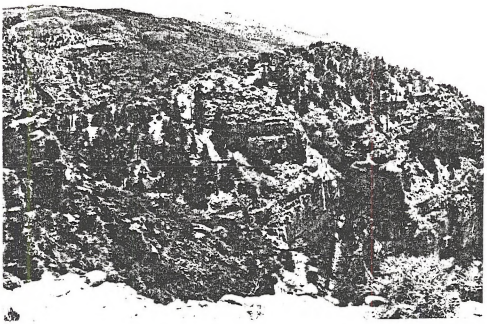
Wilderness designation of areas "A, B, D, E, F, G" would maintain the wilderness values, special features, wildlife and wildlife/habitat, cultural and visual resources, unique woodland species and watersheds within the WSA which would otherwise degrade without designation.



ALTERNATIVE	SUITABLE	NON-SUITABLE
No Action	None	All
Resource Production	A	B, C, D, E, F, G,
Mid-Range	A,B,D,E,F,G	C
Resource Protection	All	None
Preferred	A,B,D,E,F,G	C

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA(WSA)
GOSHUTE PEAK NV-010-033

View of limber pine on Morgan Pass; Goshute Peak WSA.



View of cliffs on west side of Goshute Peak WSA.

3. General Description of the WSA

a. Location. Goshute Peak WSA is located in southeastern Elko County, 20 miles southwest of West Wendover, Nevada.

b. Boundaries. The WSA is generally oblong in shape, measuring 18 miles north-south and from two to eight miles east-west. The boundary generally follows a loop road with one short cherrystem road penetrating the WSA (see Goshute Peak Alternatives Map).

c. General Environment. Goshute Peak WSA consists of steep, mountainous topography, with numerous canyons radiating from the central ridgeline of mountain peaks. At lower elevations, the area supports a pinyon-juniper ecosystem while small stands of mixed conifer forests can be found at the higher elevations (e.g. bristlecone and limber pine).

4. Application of Wilderness Planning Criteria and Quality Standards

a. Criterion No. 1 - Evaluation of Wilderness Values.

(1) Quality of the Area's Mandatory Wilderness Characteristics.

Naturalness:

Natural screening within most of the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA. However, outside sights and sounds of an existing highway adjacent to the southern end of the WSA do create some adverse impacts.

Within the boundaries of the Goshute Peak WSA are approximately 27 miles of ways, a mile long fence, a hunter's cabin, and a developed spring. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the flats and in canyons adjacent to existing roads. The fence is located along the WSAs southwestern boundary while the cabin is located along the northern boundary. The developed spring is located at the end of an existing way in the southeastern portion of the WSA.

While these imprints are within the WSA, the area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Solitude:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude were determined to exist on the basis of the size and configuration of the area, natural

screening (both vegetative and topographic) and the ability of a user to find a secluded spot.

The WSA is extremely rugged with rocky cliffs and drainages to the west and numerous densely wooded drainages to the east. This highly diverse topography provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. The majority of the WSA is densely wooded, which creates a feeling of total seclusion.

The topographic screening in the area is excellent. The WSA is composed of rugged mountains (45,770 acres) bordered to the east by rolling foothills (15,000 acres) and to the west by alluvial fans (9,000 acres). About 15 drainages, averaging from two to five miles long, wind through moderately dense stands of pinyon, limber, and bristlecone pine, Utah juniper, white fir, and mountain mahogany. The drainages are generally steeper on the west side than the east, but all are passable on foot. The ridgeline itself is quite rugged with extreme relief; elevations range from 6,000 to 9,500 feet.

Vegetative screening is outstanding because of the amount, distribution, and variety of the vegetation in the WSA. White fir, limber and bristlecone pine, and mountain mahogany provide excellent screening in the higher regions while pinyon pine and juniper provide outstanding screening at the lower elevations.

Because of the excellent topographic and vegetative screening, there are many areas where people can find a secluded spot throughout the WSA. This is particularly true in Lion, Felt, and Christmas Tree Canyons, and in unnamed drainages accessible via W-10, 15, and 27.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The Goshute Peak WSA, with its relatively large size and varied topography, contains outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined recreation experience. The majority of the WSA allows for unconfined freedom of movement due to the many drainages, ridges and peaks.

Outstanding activities available in the WSA include backpacking/camping, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation, sightseeing/photography, rock climbing, and fossil collecting.

(2) Special Features

A bald eagle wintering roost site has been discovered in the southern portion of the Goshute Peak WSA. The site is known to have been used by wintering bald eagles for the past four years and is believed to have been used for the past 15 years. District wildlife biologists believe that additional roost trees may exist in the Goshute Peak WSA because of its suitable topography and vegetative features. Such roosting areas for the threatened and endangered species greatly enhance the wilderness values of the area.

The Goshute Mountains are also the location of an annual southern migration from September to mid-October of up to 10,000 raptors. Raptors known to migrate through the WSA include golden and bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, goshawks, American kestrels, and Cooper's hawks. Steve Hoffman, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has trapped and observed raptors in the Goshute Mountains for the past four years. He feels that the area has the most productive ridge site to observe raptor migrations in the West.

The WSA is also historical range for bighorn sheep. Studies are currently in progress by the NDOW to evaluate the reintroduction potential of this area for bighorn sheep.

Fossils are generally invertebrates, with a large variety of brachiopods, corals, bryozoans, and trilobites to be found. Several rare and unusual fossil species occur in the WSA.

Because of the vast amount of limestone within the mountains, it is believed there are caves within the WSA. A few shelters have been found but no caves have been discovered.

Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available in the WSA.

Also of interest are bristlecone pine trees which are the same species as those found in the Wheeler Peak Scenic Area near Ely, Nevada, but are younger and smaller. These unique trees greatly enhance the visitor's experience because of their old age and gnarled appearance. The variety of plants and animals in the WSA is also of educational value.

Wild and free roaming horses are present within the WSA. The WSA forms the southern portion of the Goshute Mountains Wild Horse Herd Management Area.

(3) Multiple Resource Benefits (benefits to other multiple resource values which wilderness designation of the area would ensure)

Wilderness designation of this WSA would ensure benefits to soil, watershed, vegetation and wildlife habitat by preventing the impacts of new surface disturbing activities such as ORV use, woodland harvest, and mineral exploration and development. Wilderness designation would also ensure the following: preservation of natural and scenic vistas within the WSA, cultural resources would generally receive added resource protection, wildlife (wintering bald eagles and other raptors) and wild horses would receive less harassment from motor vehicles, and the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be maintained or enhanced over the long-term.

(4) Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System

a. Expanding the diversity of natural systems and features, as represented by ecosystems and landforms:

Wilderness designation of this WSA would not add a new ecosystem or landform to the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). However, the NWPS is only slightly represented in California; Forest Service lands already designated as wilderness include 43,168 acres of pinyon-juniper woodland.

b. Expanding the opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation within a day's driving time (five hours) of major population centers:

The Bluebell WSA is within a day's driving time of one major population center (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area of 100,000 people or more), Salt Lake (Metro), Utah. There are currently two designated wilderness areas and 26 areas administratively endorsed as wilderness within one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA. Additionally, there are several areas within approximately one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA that are scheduled to be studied for possible inclusion into the NWPS.

c. Balancing the geographic distribution:

The Jarbidge Wilderness Area, located in northeastern Nevada, is the only area in Nevada designated as wilderness. The Jarbidge Wilderness Area totals 64,830 acres or .11 percent of Nevada federal lands. Currently, there are less than 8 million acres in Nevada under consideration for wilderness designation as either administratively endorsed as suitable or for further planning. This represents approximately 13.3 percent of the total federal lands in Nevada.

b. Criterion No. 2: Manageability

The portions of the WSA preliminarily recommended as suitable for wilderness (Areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G") are capable of being managed as Wilderness. Area "C" is considered unmanageable (see Goshute Peak Alternatives Map). The BLM has concluded that areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G" are manageable for the following reasons. There are very few conflicts with other resource values in these areas. Additionally, the steep topography limits access in many areas. Some mineral development or unauthorized woodland harvest could be a management problem, but it is possible such developments will never take place.

Area "C" is a 4,185 acre portion of land located along the southeast boundary of the WSA. This area is unmanageable due to its proximity to adjacent Alternate Highway 93, it's substantially noticeable ways and level terrain, its good potential for metallic minerals, and conflicts with two existing ROWs located within the WSA boundary.

Quality Standards

(1) Energy and Mineral Resource Values.

Even if the entire WSA were designated as wilderness, this could cause an insignificant impact on energy and mineral resource development. The possibility of impacts would be reduced if only areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G" were designated, as preliminarily recommended in this report. Mining would be allowed on existing claims pending a validity exam providing that a valid discovery exists. New claim location and assessment work would be prohibited; development would be curtailed. Adverse impacts could occur, but they would be insignificant to individuals or companies with economic interests in mining.

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would withdraw 69,770 acres from appropriation under the mining laws and mineral leasing on the date of designation. There are approximately 20 mining claims in the WSA covering approximately 400 acres. There are 13 oil and gas leases covering approximately 12,870 acres of the study area. There are no geothermal or other leases in the WSA.

Available data indicates that the Goshute Peak WSA has relatively small areas with good locatable mineral potential, with most of the WSA having low potential for all other minerals (see EIS Mineral Potential Map for the Goshute Peak WSA).

Goshute Peak Mineral Potential Acres

	Potential		
	High(3)	Good (2)	Low(1)
Minerals (M)	0	5,395	64,375
Phosphates(P)	0	0	69,770
Oil & Gas (OG)	0	0	69,770
Geothermal (G)	0	0	69,770

Source: Draft GEM Assessment 1983.

Mineral potential has been estimated on the basis of the Wells Mineral Resources Inventory, company responses to request for input, field work, available literature and the GEM Assessment of the WSA.

The proposed action would reduce potential impacts to minerals by reducing the number of mining claims by 10, deleting 2,000 acres with good mineral potential and 4,650 acres leased for oil and gas from the WSA.

Small high grade barite occurrences have been reported along the westside of the range. A small amount of silver and copper was produced from the Ferguson Spring Mining District, adjacent to the east boundary of the WSA. Mineral Resource Inventory data show anomalous concentrations of gold, silver, barite, copper, zinc, lead and maganese in the Ferguson Spring Mining District. Areas shown on the Goshute Peak Mineral Potential Map in the EIS were delineated on the basis of geochemical anomalies, mining claims, alteration, favorable host rocks and structure.

(2) Impacts on Other Resources: The extent to which other resource values or uses would be foregone or adversely affected as a result of wilderness designation.

Wilderness designation of the Goshute Peak WSA, or any part of it, would cause no significant adverse impacts on watershed, soil, air, recreation, wild horses, wildlife, cultural or visual resources. These resources would be beneficially impacted with designation (see Impacts Table for Goshute Peak at the end of this report).

Woodland Products - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause significant adverse impacts to woodland products. The opportunity to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells resource area by 17 percent would be foregone with wilderness designation.

Livestock Grazing - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause few adverse impacts on livestock grazing. Portions of the area are currently grazed by livestock under BLM permit, but no range improvements are proposed and very few motor

vehicles are used within the WSA to manage livestock. Due to the lack of water and rugged terrain of the WSA, the potential for future range improvements is low.

Corridors - Wilderness designation of this WSA would cause adverse impacts to potential corridors in area "C".

Wilderness designation of the 65,585 acres recommended as preliminarily suitable would cause adverse impacts to woodland products, livestock grazing and corridors (refer to the Impact Table at the end of this report).

(3) Impacts or Nondesignation on Wilderness Values.

If the entire Goshute Peak WSA is not designated wilderness, 69,770 acres would remain open to mineral entry and ORV use, resulting in exploration and development activities, with associated road construction, woodland removal, and surface disturbance. Corridor development would also take place in area "C". These activities would impair the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, leading to a decrease in recreational opportunities in the WSA for nonmotorized forms of recreation. Additionally, nondesignation of the WSA would adversely impact special features and multiple resource benefits found in the WSA.

If areas "A, B, D, E, F, and G" are designated as wilderness (as recommended in this report), only 4,185 acres would remain open for mineral entry and ORV use and there would be much less impact on naturalness or on opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Impacts on special features and multiple resource benefits would also be reduced.

(4) Public Comments: (This standard is covered in Section 6 below).

(5) Local Social and Economic Effects:

Wilderness designation would preserve opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There would be a small benefit to service sector businesses in the local area due to purchases made from wilderness visitors, but it would not be significant.

Individuals in mining may be adversely impacted by increased costs and foregone employment, income and profits by all of the alternatives except the No Action Alternative.

The employment and income of Elko County would not be significantly impacted by any of the alternatives.

5. WSA Alternatives

a. Four alternatives were analyzed for the Goshute Peak WSA in the Draft EIS.

Resource Protection - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA (69,770 acres).

Midrange or Preferred - Wilderness designation of 65,585 acres - all of the WSA except those lands in the southwest portion are considered unmanageable.

Resource Production - Wilderness designation of 25,830 acres - only the main ridge core area of the WSA is recommended preliminarily suitable.

No Action - Wilderness designation of none of the WSA.

The environmental impacts of these alternatives are summarized in the table at the end of this report.

b. The environmentally preferrable alternative is the Resource Protection Alternative.

c. The BLM's preferred alternative is the Midrange Alternative. In its selection, all practical means to avoid environmental impacts and reduce significant conflicts have been adopted.

d. To mitigate impacts in the lands not designated as wilderness, after Congress has acted, the BLM will manage mining activities under the regulations 43 CFR 3809 to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation. A wilderness management plan will be developed and implemented to minimize any impacts within the wilderness.

6. Summary of WSA - Specific Public Comments

a. During the inventory phase some comments were received which dealt with other resource values and potential resource conflicts. Comments opposing the classification of Goshute Peak as a WSA are as follows: (1) it was unnatural, (1) it lacked solitude, (1) it lacked primitive recreation opportunities (3) other resource values (minerals, livestock) outweighed wilderness values. Comments supporting WSA classification are as follows: (1) adequate size, (1) roadless, (3) the area was natural, (4) it had solitude, (7) it had primitive recreation opportunities, and (2) it had supplemental values (i.e. wild horses, raptors, bristlecone pines). The Department of the Air Force supported the WSA classification if specific provisions allow for over flights above and adjacent to the area.

b. A series of public meetings and public hearings were held in association with the study phase draft environmental impact statement for the WSAs within the Wells Resource Area. These meetings were a combination workshop and scoping meeting and were held in Elko, Nevada and Reno, Nevada. Formal public hearings were held in Reno, Elko and Wells, Nevada.

A total of 52 comments were received, both oral and written (Table 5).

TABLE 3. Public Comment Summary - Goshute Peak WSA

	Total Comments Received	Supports More Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports Less Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative
Oral	14	2	5	1
Written	38	2	5	23
TOTALS	52	4	10	24

c. County: No comments pertaining to wilderness were received from county agencies or officials.

State: Comments were received from the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. The Nevada Department of Wildlife's comment supported the BLM's Preferred Alternative. The Nevada Department of Agriculture's comment said "Implement the No Action Alternative. These lands should not be managed as wilderness until they are finally declared wilderness."

Federal: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated the final EIS should clarify what interim management measures will be in effect during the wilderness classification process. Additionally, the final EIS should clarify if off-road vehicle use in the WSAs prior to designation would affect the potential wilderness status of the WSAs and whether access for mining, oil and gas exploration of other development will be allowed during the wilderness designation process. The EPA also stated that the FEIS should discuss how USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral surveys will be used to modify the acres identified as suitable.

The Air Force stated they support alternatives that do not restrict military overflights.

SOUTH PEQUOP WSA

1. NV-010-035, South Pequops, 41,090 acres

2. Recommendation and Rationale

a. A total of 37,573 acres of public land is recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness, pending the results of the U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines mineral survey, while a total of 3,517 acres of public land is recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Those lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Areas "B", "C" and "D" shown on South Pequop Alternatives Map) are on the periphery of the WSA. Removing these lands from the area recommended preliminarily suitable would reduce potentialconflicts with ORV use, oil and gas leases, potential vegetative manipulations, Desert Land Entry Applications, minerals and adjacent private land.

The portion of the WSA preliminarily recommended as suitable for wilderness (Area "A") is capable of being managed as wilderness. However, areas "B, C, and D" are considered unmanageable. The BLM has concluded that area "A" is managable for the following reasons. There are very few conflicts with other resource values in this area and the rugged topography and dense vegetatio of area "A" limits access. Area "A" is also manageable as wilderness due to the low probability of nonconforming but allowable uses occurring in this portion of the WSA.

There are no mining claims in the WSA. No discoveries of ore have been reported in the WSA and no drilling has taken place. However, area "A" does contain 14,613 acres with good mineral potential and 16,600 acres leased for oil and gas.

Wilderness designation of area "A" would maintain the wilderness values, special features, wildlife habitat, cultural and visual resources, unique woodland species and watersheds within the WSA which would otherwise degrade over time without designation.

3. General Description of the WSA

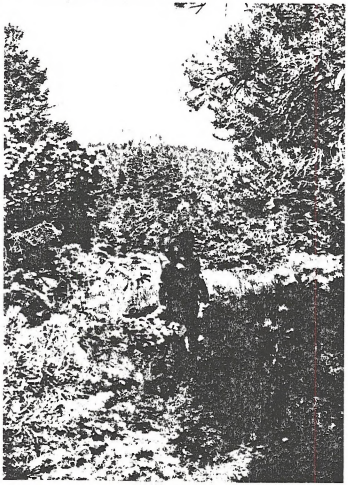
a. Location. The South Pequops WSA is located in southeastern Elko County, Nevada about 45 miles southeast of the town of Elko. The WSA is located in the southern portion of the Pequop Mountains.

b. Boundaries. It is roughly U-shaped, with the open end pointing toward the northwest. The area encompassed is approximately 12 miles north-south by four-to-eight miles east-west (see Alternatives Map for South Pequop WSA).

ALTERNATIVE	SUITABLE	NON-SUITABLE
No Action	None	All
Resource Production	None	All
Mid-Range	A	B, C, D,
Resource Protection.	All	None
Preferred	A	B, C, D

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA(WSA)
SOUTH PEQUOP NV-010-035

View of rocky, forested hillside in South Pequop WSA.



View of backpacker in east side drainage; South Pequop WSA.

c. General Environment. The area contains about 80 percent mountainous and moderately forested terrain, with the remainder consisting of shrub dominated low lands. Elevations range from 5,640 to 8,952 feet.

Vegetation consists of sagebrush-grass covered steppes at the lower elevations to forested ridges in the mountains. Tree species include pinyon pine, Utah juniper, and mountain mahogany, with isolated stands of white fir, limber and bristlecone pines in higher, northern exposures.

4. Application of Wilderness Planning Criteria and Quality Standards

a. Criterion No. 1 - Evaluation of Wilderness Values.

(1) Quality of the Area's Mandatory Wilderness Characteristics

Naturalness:

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

The WSA contains relatively few man-made improvements for its size. There are 15 ways totalling 20 miles and five cherrystem roads totalling 10 miles which penetrate the area. These routes trend from the low elevation borders of the WSA to its high elevation interior and are utilized by livestock grazing operators and recreationists. With designation, the ways would be closed to motorized use and are expected to rehabilitate naturally over time. Much of the area would remain accessible as vehicles could be used on the border road and five cherrystem roads.

A bench mark is located atop the 8,952 peak in Section 10 of T. 32 N., R. 65 E., and a well and trough for livestock use are found at the terminal end of road 4. A few prospect pits are located along the border road near the top of the ridgeline in sections 27, 28, 29, and 30 of T. 31 N., R. 65 E. Several portable troughs used for watering livestock are located just outside the WSA along the Nine Mile Canyon border road, and at the terminal end of road 4. These impacts are separated by large distances and are substantially unnoticeable in the WSA.

Solitude:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude were determined to exist on the basis of the size and configuration of the area, natural screening, both vegetative and topographic, and the ability of a user to find a secluded spot.

Outstanding solitude is attainable throughout the pinyon pine-juniper covered WSA. There are numerous unnamed drainages which trend southeasterly and northwesterly to the ridgeline. In combination with the moderately dense vegetation, they provide places of seclusion for the visitor.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The South Pequop WSA, with its moderate size and varied terrain, contains outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation experience. The majority of the WSA allows for unconfined freedom of movement due to the many drainages, ridges and peaks.

The outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided by the following activities: hiking, backpacking, fossil collecting, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, and geological features.

(2) Special Features

Several rare and unusual fossils occur in conjunction with more common brachiopods, corals, bryozoans, and trilobites.

The summit of the Pequop Mountains provides excellent vistas of other mountain ranges in the area, including the Deep Creek Mountains, Goshute, Cherry Creek, Ruby, and East Humboldt Ranges.

A herd of about 80 wild horses roam in this area, which is part of the Spruce-Pequop Wild Horse Herd Management Use Area.

Bristlecone pine trees are found within the WSA. These trees, although younger and smaller than those in the Wheeler Peak Area near Ely, Nevada, are still unique because of their age and gnarled appearance.

(3) Multiple Resource Benefits (benefits to other multiple resource values which wilderness designation of the area would ensure)

Wilderness designation of this WSA would ensure benefits to soil, watershed, vegetation and wildlife habitat by preventing the impacts of new surface disturbing activities such as ORV use, corridor development, mineral exploration and development and woodland harvest. Wilderness designation would also ensure the following: preservation of natural and scenic vistas within the WSA, cultural resources would generally receive added resource protection, wildlife and wild horses would receive less harassment from motor vehicles, and the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be maintained or

enhanced over the long-term.

(4) Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

a. Expanding the diversity of natural systems and features, as represented by ecosystems and landforms:

Wilderness designation of this WSA would not add a new ecosystem or landform to the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). However, the NWPS is only slightly represented in California; Forest Service lands already designated as wilderness include 43,168 acres of pinyon-juniper woodland.

b. Expanding the opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation within a day's driving time (five hours) of major population centers:

The South Pequop WSA is within a day's driving time of one major population center or Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA: 100,000 people or more); Salt Lake (Metro), Utah. There are currently two designated wilderness areas and 26 areas administratively endorsed as wilderness within one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA. Additionally, there are several areas within approximately one day's drive of the Salt Lake SMSA that are scheduled to be studied for possible inclusion into the NWPS.

c. Balancing the geographic distribution:

The Jarbidge Wilderness Area, located in northeastern Nevada, is the only area in Nevada designated as wilderness. The Jarbidge Wilderness Area totals 64,830 acres or .11 percent of Nevada federal lands. Currently, there are less than 8 million acres in Nevada under consideration for wilderness designation as either administratively endorsed as suitable or for further planning. This represents approximately 13.3 percent of the total federal lands in Nevada.

b. Criterion No. 2: Manageability

The boundaries of the 37,573 acre portion of the WSA (Area "A") are identifiable and manageable. Some degradation of wilderness values could occur from illegal nonconforming uses, but, the area can generally be managed to maintain its wilderness character over the long-term.

None of the WSA has been rated as having high potential for any minerals. Recommending the 3,517 acres as being nonsuitable for wilderness would allow for mineral exploration and development on this acreage, of which about 1,270 acres have low potential for all minerals and about 2,250 acres have good potential for phosphates.

The 3,517 acres along the eastern boundary (areas "B. C. and D") are considered unmanageable. Oil and gas leases, gentle terrain which provides good ORV access and potential for vegetative manipulations, the phosphate potential previously discussed, DLE applications, and proximity to adjacent private land are the primary reasons for the proposed boundary adjustments. This would ensure that the area recommended as being suitable for wilderness can actually be managed for that purpose.

The WSA is a solid block of public land. Fifteen oil and gas leases totalling 18,600 acres and 7 DLE applications on 720 acres are located in the WSA. No mining claims are known to exist. No discoveries of ore have been reported and no drilling has taken place. Some seismic testing has occurred in the WSA (two lines trending east-west).

c. Quality Standards

(1) Energy and Mineral Resource Values:

Even if the entire WSA were designated wilderness, this could cause an insignificant impact on energy and mineral resource development. The possibility of impacts would be slightly reduced if only area "A" were designated, as preliminarily recommended in this report.

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would withdraw 41,090 acres from appropriation under the mining laws and mineral leasing on the date of designation, whichever is later. There are no mining claims in the WSA. There are 15 oil and gas leases covering approximately 18,600 acres of the study area. There are no geothermal or other leases, or mining claims in the WSA.

Available data indicate mineral potential for the WSA is considered low, with the exception of phosphates and locatables (see table below).

South Pequop WSA Mineral Potential Acres

	Potential		
	High(3)	Good (2)	Low (1)
Minerals (M)	0	500	40,590
Phosphates (P)	0	16,363	24,727
Oil & Gas (OG)	0	0	41,090
Geothermal (G)	0	0	41,090

Source: GEM Assessment 1983.

Mineral potential has been estimated on the basis of the Wells Mineral Resources Inventory, Company responses to a request for input, field work, available literature, and the GEM Assessment for the WSA.

The proposed action would reduce potential impacts to minerals by deleting 2,250 acres with good mineral potential and 3,000 acres leased for oil and gas from the WSA.

Mineral exploration of phosphate rock has taken place, but no mineral development has occurred in the WSA. Much of the WSA (40%) has good potential for phosphate rock, but the phosphate beds are thin or of low grade and little interest has been expressed to date. A small area (500 acres) along the northern boundary has good potential for base metals.

(2) Impacts on Other Resources: The extent to which other resource values or uses would be foregone or adversely affected as a result of wilderness designation.

Wilderness designation of the entire South Pequop WSA or any part of it would cause no significant adverse impacts on watershed, soil, air, recreation, wild horses, wildlife, cultural or visual resources. These resources would be beneficially impacted with designation (see Impacts Table for South Pequop WSA at the end of this report).

Woodland Products - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause adverse impacts to woodland products. The opportunity to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells Resource Area by 11 percent would be foregone with wilderness designation and is a significant adverse impact.

Livestock Grazing - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would cause few adverse impacts on livestock grazing. Portions of the area are currently grazed by livestock under BLM permit, but no range improvements are proposed and motor vehicles used to manage livestock are primarily driven on the border road and five cherrystem roads. Due to the lack of water and rugged terrain of the WSA, the potential for future range improvements is low (except for Areas "B, C, and D").

Wilderness designation of the 37,573 acres preliminarily recommended suitable would cause adverse impacts to woodland products and livestock grazing. The opportunity to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells Resource Area by about ten percent would be foregone. Impacts to livestock grazing could result in slight increased costs of operations (see impact table at the end of this report).

(3) Impacts of Nondesignation on Wilderness Values:

If the entire South Pequop WSA is not designated wilderness, 41,090 acres would remain open to mineral entry and ORV use,

resulting in exploration and development activities, with associated road construction, woodland removal, and surface disturbance. Range improvements could potentially be developed in areas "B, C, and D". These activities would impair the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, leading to a decrease in recreational opportunities in the WSA for nonmotorized forms of recreation. Additionally, nondesignation of the WSA would adversely impact special features and multiple resource benefits found in the WSA.

If area "A" is designated as wilderness (as recommended in this report), only 3,517 acres would remain open for mineral entry and ORV use and there would be much less impact on naturalness or on opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Impacts on special features and multiple resource benefits would also be reduced.

(4) Public Comments: (This standard is covered in Section 6 below).

(5) Local Social and Economic Effects:

Wilderness designation would preserve opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There would be a small benefit to service sector businesses in the local area due to purchases made from wilderness visitors, but it would not be significant.

Individuals in mining may be adversely impacted by increased costs and foregone employment, income and profits by all of the alternatives except the No Action Alternative.

The employment and income of Elko County would not be significantly impacted by any of the alternatives.

5. WSA Alternatives

a. Four alternatives were analyzed for the South Pequop WSA in the Draft EIS.

Resource Protection - Wilderness designation of the entire WSA (41,090 acres).

Midrange or Preferred Alternatives - Wilderness designation of 37,573 acres. An area comprising 3,517 acres along the eastern boundary considered unmanageable as wilderness would not be designated.

Resource Production - Wilderness designation of none of the area.

No Action - Wilderness designation of none of the WSA.

b. The environmentally preferrable alternative is the Resource Protection Alternative.

c. The BLM's preferred alternative is the Midrange Alternative. In its selection, all practical means to avoid environmental impacts and reduce significant conflicts have been adopted.

d. To mitigate impacts in the lands not designated as wilderness after Congress has acted, the BLM will manage mining activities under Provisions of 43 CFR 3809 to prevent unnecessary degradation. A wilderness management plan will be developed and implemented to minimize any impacts within the wilderness.

6. Summary of WSA - Specific Public Comments

a. During the inventory phase some comments were received which dealt with other resource values and potential resource conflicts. Comments opposing the classification of South Pequop as a WSA are as follows: (1) it was unnatural, (1) it was roaded and roads were used and maintained, (1) boundary changes would eliminate resource conflicts. Comments supporting classification are as follows: (3) area natural, (4) solitude, (5) primitive recreation opportunities (6) comments stated supplemental values were in the WSA (i.e. wild horses).

b. A series of public meetings and public hearings were held in association with the study phase and draft environmental impact statement for the WSAs within the Wells Resource Area. These meetings were a combination workshop and scoping meeting and were held in Elko, Nevada and Reno, Nevada. Formal public hearings were later held in Reno, Elko, and Wells, Nevada.

A total of 51 comments were received, both oral and written (Table 6).

TABLE 6. Public Comment Summary - South Pequop WSA

	Total Comments Received	Supports More Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports Less Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative
Oral	14	2	5	1
Written	37	2	5	23
TOTALS	51	4	10	24

c. County: No comments pertaining to wilderness were received from county agencies or officials.

State: Comments were received from the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. The Nevada Department of Wildlife's comment supported the BLM's Preferred Alternative. The Nevada Department of Agriculture's comment said "Implement the No Action Alternative. These lands should not be managed as wilderness until they are finally declared wilderness.

Federal: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated the final EIS should clarify what interim management measures will be in effect during the wilderness classification process. Additionally, the final EIS should clarify if off-road vehicle use in the WSAs prior to designation would affect the potential wilderness status of the WSAs and whether access for mining, oil and gas exploration of other development will be allowed during the wilderness designation process. The EPA also stated that the FEIS should discuss how USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral surveys will be used to modify the acres identified as suitable.

The Air Force stated they support alternatives that do not restrict military overflights.

BAD LANDS WSA

1. NV-010-184, Bad Lands, 9,426 acres

2. Recommendation and Rationale

a. Approximately 8,415 acres are recommended preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation while 1,011 acres are recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Those lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Areas "B, C, D, E, and F" shown on Bad Lands Alternatives Map) are along the periphery of the WSA. Removing these lands from the recommended preliminarily suitable area would reduce conflicts and enhance manageability. Areas "B" and "C" are recommended nonsuitable due to a substantially noticeable bladed fenceline located along the western boundary of these two areas. Areas "D" and "E" are recommended nonsuitable as an existing phoneline forms the northern boundaries of these two areas. Area "F" is recommended nonsuitable due to it's odd configuration, proximity to private land and man-caused disturbances (a seeding, missed during the intensive wilderness inventory, was discovered during the wilderness study).

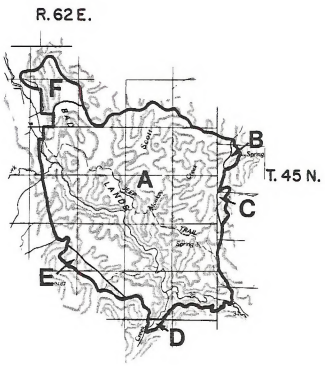
Area "A" is recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation and includes the majority of the rugged, volcanic terrain of the Bad Lands area. These rugged cliffs and canyons are extremely scenic, with Salmon Falls Creek meandering southwest to northeast through the WSA. Elevations range from 5,700 in the canyon to over 6,000 on benches and ridges outside the canyon.

Vegetative cover is scarce away from the canyons, but lush riparian vegetation such as willow, golden current, and chokecherry thrives in and along Salmon Falls Creek and provides excellent cover. Sagebrush and assorted grasses are commonly found in much of the WSA.

Area "A" is manageable as wilderness due primarily to the extreme ruggedness and relative inaccessibility of much of the area. The steepness of the canyons and undulating nature of the ridges in the WSA tend to screen activities or visitors from other activities or visitors in adjacent stream drainages or on adjacent ridges.

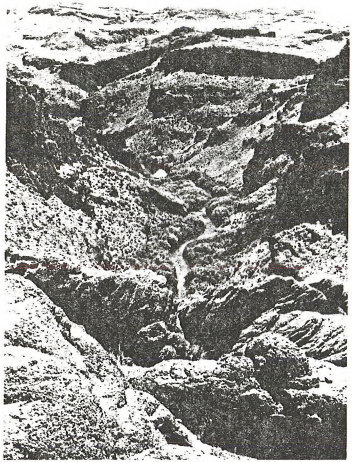
Within area "A" there are essentially no resource conflicts. The primary potential conflicts which could occur would be with minerals; 2,225 acres leased for oil and gas with low potential and 400 acres with good potential for metallics and nonmetallics are located in area "A". There are no mining claims in area "A". No oil and gas exploration has occurred in area "A".

Area "A" offers outstanding viewsheds both within and outside the WSA, the Jarbidge Wilderness Area is visible to the west.

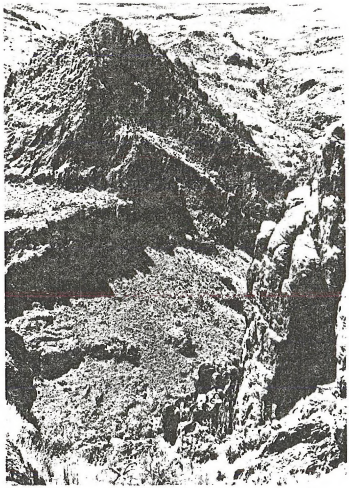


ALTERNATIVE	SUITABLE	NON-SUITABLE
No Action	None	All
Resource Production	None	All
Mid-Range	A	B, C, D, E, F
Resource Protection	All	None
Preferred	A	B, C, D, E, F

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA(WSA)
BAD LANDS NV-010-184



View downstream of Salmon Falls Creek; Bad Lands.



View of volcanic cliffs in Bad Lands.

Wilderness designation of area "A" would maintain the wilderness values, special features, wildlife and wildlife habitat, cultural and visual resources, and watersheds which would otherwise degrade without designation.

3. General Description of the WSA

a. Location. The Bad Lands WSA is located in northeastern Elko County, 25 miles southwest of Jackpot, Nevada.

b. Boundaries. The WSA, which is generally circular and uniform with the northwest portion oblong in shape, measures about five miles north-south by about three miles east-west. There are no cherrystem roads entering the WSA (See Bad Lands Alternatives Map).

c. General Environment. The Bad Lands WSA consists of steep, rugged volcanic cliffs and canyons, with Salmon Falls Creek being the largest of the canyons in the WSA. Dense riparian vegetation occurs along Salmon Falls Creek while sagebrush steppe vegetation occurs outside the canyon.

4. Application of Wilderness Planning Criteria and Quality Standards

a. Criterion No. 1 - Evaluation of Wilderness Values.

(1) Quality of the Area's Mandatory Wilderness Characteristics.

Generally, natural screening within the WSA is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA. The one exception to this is the oddly configured area "F" in the extreme northwest portion of the WSA.

Within the boundaries of the Bad Lands WSA are approximately three miles of vehicle ways, two small earthen reservoirs, an unauthorized phoneline, two miles of fence and a 100 acre seeding. The ways, reservoirs, phoneline, fence and seeding are all located adjacent to the WSA border roads. Total acreage involved is approximately 140 acres. While these imprints are within the WSA, area "A" generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Solitude:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude were determined to exist on the basis of the size and configuration of the area, natural screening (both vegetative and topographic) and the ability of a user to find a secluded spot.

The highly diverse topography of the WSA provides numerous opportunities for solitude. The majority of the WSA consists of rugged volcanic cliffs and canyons.

Most of the unit is sparsely vegetated with low growing vegetation. Some scattered groupings of big sagebrush occur in intermittent drainages such as Scott and Monkey Creeks. The main canyon and lower portions of adjacent side canyons are densely vegetated with a variety of plants. Ferns, penstemon, and several other plant species thrive in these cooler, shaded canyons. Riparian willow and chokecherry, and snowberry reach heights above 15 feet and provide excellent vegetative cover and screening. In many areas, big sagebrush attains heights of six feet and also provides good screening.

The ability of the user to find a secluded spot within the unit is considered excellent due to the many different areas which provide screening and solitude. The main canyon's sinuousity, rugged side canyons, and rocky outcrops all provide excellent solitude. Dense riparian vegetation in the main and lower portions of adjoining side canyons also provide excellent screening. Sparsely vegetated mesas generally provide little screening or solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The Bad Lands WSA, even with its relatively small size, contains outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined recreation experience. The majority of the WSA allows for unconfined freedom of movement due to the many drainages, hills and ridges. While users would concentrate along Salmon Falls Creek, the dense riparian vegetation and sinuousity of the canyon ensures that opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are available.

Activities available in the WSA include backpacking/camping, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation, sightseeing/photography, kayaking and stream fishing.

(2) Special Features

The untrampled streamside riparian habitat is considered a unique ecological feature. The fishery through the WSA offers one of the best opportunities for stream fishing in Elko County. The ecosystem of the WSA appears to be suitable for reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep. This potential transplant site is listed as fourth priority in the state of Nevada by the NDOW (1982). The WSA also contains a diversity in flora and fauna.

Rugged canyonland scenery, colorful volcanic rock outcroppings, and scenic vistas of the Jarbidge Mountains are available.

Geologically, rhyolitic lava flows and eroded pinnacles of volcanic ash are interesting features found in the WSA.

(3) Multiple Resource Benefits (benefits to other multiple resource values which wilderness designation of the area would ensure)

Wilderness designation of this WSA would ensure benefits to soil, watershed, vegetation and wildlife habitat by preventing the impacts of new surface disturbing activities such as mineral exploration and development and ORV use. Wilderness designation would also ensure the following: preservation of natural and scenic vistas within the WSA; cultural resources would generally receive added resource protection; wildlife (potentially bighorn sheep if introduced into the area prior to designation) would receive less harassment from motor vehicles; and the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be maintained or enhanced over the long-term.

(4) Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System

a. Expanding the diversity of natural systems and features, as represented by ecosystems and landforms:

Wilderness designation of this WSA would not add a new ecosystem or land form to the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). However, the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem is only slightly represented in the NWPS in Nevada and California. Portions of Forest Service lands already designated as wilderness include 6,483 acres in Nevada and 28,062 acres in California in the Sagebrush-Steppe ecosystem.

b. Expanding the opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation within a day's driving time (five hours) of major population centers:

The Bad Lands WSA is within a day's driving time of one major population center (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas of 100,000 people or more) Boise, Idaho. There are currently eight areas totalling 3,207,118 acres in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) within one day's drive of Boise, Idaho. There are 21 areas totalling 1,057,891 acres which are administratively endorsed for wilderness designation within one day's drive of Boise, Idaho. Additionally, there are several areas within approximately one day's drive of Boise, Idaho that are scheduled to be studied for possible inclusion into the NWPS.

c. Balancing the geographic distribution:

The Jarbidge Wilderness Area, located in northeastern Nevada, is the only area in Nevada designated as wilderness. The Jarbidge Wilderness Area totals 64,830

acres or .11 percent of Nevada federal lands. Currently, there are less than 8 million acres in Nevada under consideration for wilderness designation, as either administratively endorsed as suitable or for further planning. This represents approximately 13.3 percent of the total federal lands in Nevada.

b. Criterion No. 2: Manageability

Area "A" of the WSA recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness is capable of being managed as wilderness. However, Areas "B, C, D, E and F" are considered unmanageable (refer to Bad Lands Alternatives Map). The BLM has concluded that area "A" is manageable for the following reasons: there are very few conflicts with other resource values in these areas and the steep, rugged topography of limits access. Some mineral exploration or development could potentially occur and become a management problem, but it is possible such developments will never take place.

The Bad Lands WSA is a solid block of public land totalling 9,426 acres. There are no private inholdings, state lands, or rights-of-way within its borders. No mining claims exist in the WSA. No discoveries of ore have been reported and no drilling has taken place within or adjacent to the WSA.

Three ways exist in the WSA totalling three miles. The border road and ways are used for vehicular access, primarily by recreationists and livestock operators. All roads would remain open for all users to provide continued access. The three ways would be closed to vehicular traffic if the area is designated wilderness.

For several reasons area "F" (the northwestern 630 acres) is unmanageable as a wilderness area. The area's odd configuration, coupled with its proximity to Twin Meadows Ranch, adversely impact the feeling of solitude one would experience in the area. An unnatural 100 acre seeding is also located in area "F". The previously discussed bladed fenceline is proposed to form a portion of the eastern border of the wilderness area (Areas "B, C") while the phoneline and its associated road would form its southern border (Areas "D, E"). All these boundary adjustments would result in a manageable wildenress and would delete approximately 1,011 acres.

c. Quality Standards

(1) Energy and Mineral Resource Values.

Even if the entire WSA were designated wilderness, this would result in an insignificant impact on energy and mineral resource development. This impact would be reduced if only area "A" only was designated, as preliminarily recommended in this report.

Wilderness designation of the entire WSA would withdraw 9,426 acres from appropriation under the mining laws and mineral

leasing on the date of designation. There are currently no mining claims or geothermal leases in the WSA. There is one oil and gas lease covering approximately 2,325 acres of the study area.

Available data indicates that the Bad Lands WSA has relatively small areas with good locatable mineral potential with most of the WSA having low potential for all other minerals (See EIS Mineral Potential Map for the Bad Lands WSA).

Bad Lands Mineral Potential Acres

	Potential		
	High (3)	Good (2)	Low(1)
Minerals (M)	0	500	8,926
Phosphates (P)	0	0	9,426
Oil & Gas (OG)	0	0	9,426
Geothermal (G)	0	0	9,426

Source: Draft GEM Assessment 1983.

Mineral potential has been estimated on the basis of the Wells Mineral Resources Inventory, company responses to request for input, field work, available literature and the GEM Assessment of the WSA.

The proposed action would reduce potential impacts to minerals by deleting 100 acres with good mineral potential and 575 acres leased for oil and gas from the WSA.

The Bad Lands WSA is almost entirely underlain by Tertiary felsic volcanic extrusives of which rhyolite to dacite flows and domes are dominant. Lesser amounts of volcanoclastic rocks consisting of tuffaceous sandstone and siltstone also occur. A small amount of Permain through Mississippian age limestone may occur along the eastern border of the WSA.

The Contact Mining District is located about two miles east of the WSA. The district has produced minor amounts of copper, and very small amounts of tungsten, molybdemum, gold, silver, and lead. Mineralization in the district occurs along contacts between Mesozoic granites and Missippian - Permain limestones and shales.

(2) Impacts on Other Resources: The extent to which other resource values or uses would be foregone or adversely affected as a result of wilderness designation:

Wilderness designation of the Bad Lands WSA or any part of it would cause no significant adverse impacts on watershed, soil, air, recreation, wild horses, wildlife, cultural or visual resources. These resources would be beneficially impacted with

designation (see Impacts Table for Bad Lands at the end of this report).

Livestock Grazing - Wilderness designation of this WSA would cause very few adverse impacts under any alternative on livestock grazing. A seeding, located in area "F", would be impacted with wilderness designation. Portions of the WSA are currently grazed by livestock under BLM permit, but no range improvements are proposed and very few motor vehicles are used within the WSA to manage livestock. The potential for future range improvements is low in most of the WSA due to the rugged terrain.

(3) Impacts of Nondesignation on Wilderness Values:

If the entire Bad Lands WSA is not designated wilderness, 9,426 acres would remain open to mineral entry and ORV use, resulting in exploration and development activities, with associated road construction, and surface disturbance. Mineral exploration could potentially occur along the eastern border in areas "B and C". These activities would impair the naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, leading to a decrease in recreational opportunities for nonmotorized forms of recreation. Additionally, nondesignation of the WSA would adversely impact special features and multiple resource benefits found in the WSA. The potential to reintroduce bighorn sheep into the area would be significantly reduced without wilderness designation.

If area "A" is designated as wilderness (as recommended in this report), only 1,011 acres would remain open for mineral entry and ORV use and there would be much less impact on naturalness or on opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Impacts on special features and multiple resource benefits would also be reduced. The opportunities to reintroduce bighorn sheep would be greatly enhanced with designation of area "A" as wilderness.

(4) Public Comments: (This standard is covered in Section 6 below).

(5) Local Social and Economic Effects:

Wilderness designation would preserve opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There would be a small benefit to service sector businesses in the local area due to purchases made from wilderness visitors, but it would not be significant.

Individuals in mining may be adversely impacted by increased costs and foregone employment, income and profits by any of the alternatives.

The employment and income of Elko County would not be significantly impacted by any of the alternatives.

5. WSA Alternatives

a. Four alternatives were analyzed for Bad Lands WSA in the Draft EIS.

Resource Protection - wilderness designation of the entire WSA (9,426 acres).

Midrange or Preferred - wilderness designation of 8,415 acres - all of the WSA except those lands considered unmanageable along the periphery of the WSA (Areas "B, C, D, E, F").

Resource Production - wilderness designation of none of the WSA.

No Action - wilderness designation of none of the WSA.

The environmental impacts of these alternatives are summarized in the table at the end of this report.

b. The environmentally preferrable alternative is the Resource Protection Alternative.

c. The BLM's Preferred Alternative is the Midrange Alternative. In its selection, all practical means to avoid environmental impacts and reduce conflicts have been adopted.

d. To mitigate impacts in the lands not designated as wilderness, after Congress has acted, the BLM will manage mining activities under the regulations 43 CFR 3809 to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation. A wilderness management plan will be developed and implemented to minimize any impacts within the wilderness.

6. Summary of WSA - Specific Public Comments

a. During the inventory phase some comments were received which dealt with other resource values and potential resource conflicts. Comments opposing the classification of Bad Lands as a WSA are as follows: (1) it was to small, (1) it was not natural, (7) it lacked solitude, (4) it lacked outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, (3) stated conflicts with other resource values exist (minerals, livestock) (2) boundary changes would reduce conflicts. Comments supporting WSA classification are as follows: (1) adequate size, (3) area natural, (3) outstanding solitude, (4) outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, and (2) supplemental values exist in the WSA (i.e. scenic etc.).

b. A series of public meetings and public hearings were held in association with the study phase and draft environmental impact statement for the WSAs within the Wells Resource Area. The meetings were a combination workshop and scoping meeting and were held in Elko, Nevada and Reno, Nevada. Formal public hearings were later held in Reno, Elko, and Wells, Nevada.

A total of 48 comments were received, both oral and written (Table 7).

TABLE 7. Public Comment Summary - Bad Lands WSA

	Total Comments Received	Supports More Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports DEIS Preferred Alternative	Supports Less Wilderness Than DEIS Preferred Alternative
Oral	12	2	5	0
Written	36	2	5	23
TOTALS	48	4	10	23

c. County: No comments pertaining to wilderness were receives from county agencies or officials.

State: Comments were received from the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. The Nevada Department of Wildlife's comment supported the BLM's Preferred Alternative. The Nevada Department of Agriculture's comment said "Implement the No Action Alternative. These lands should not be managed as willderness until they are finally declared wilderness."

Federal: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated the final EIS should clarify what interim management measures will be in effect during the wilderness classification process. Additionally, the final EIS should clarify if off-road vehicle use in the WSAs prior to designation would affect the potential wilderness status of the WSAs and whether access for mining, oil and gas exploration of other development will be allowed during the wilderness designation process. The EPA also stated that the FEIS should discuss how USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral surveys will be used to modify the acres identified as suitable.

The Air Force stated they support alternatives that do not restrict military overflights.

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE
AND WSA

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
BLUEBELL WSA			
WILDERNESS			
Wilderness values maintained on 48,308 acres and lost on 7,357 unmanageable acres adversely affected by present boundary location. Unmanageable impacts include potential mineral development adjacent to WSA, access problems, and unauthorized woodland harvest and motor vehicle use. Each of the alternatives, except the No Action Alternative would add diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The entire WSA (55,665 acres) is recommended preliminarily suitable.	Management actions include adjusting boundaries to reduce resource conflicts and form a more logical management configuration. Wilderness values maintained are the same as the Resource Protection Alternative. 48,308 acres recommended as preliminarily suitable and 7,357 acres recommended nonsuitable.	Adjusting boundaries would greatly reduce resource conflicts and form a manageable area. Wilderness values maintained on 25,830 acres recommended preliminarily suitable and lost on 29,835 acres recommended nonsuitable to resource use and development. Decrease in solitude opportunities by 54% reduction in size. Outstanding opportunities for solitude still present in area recommended as suitable.	Wilderness values lost to resource use and development over the long-term. Naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be lost to oil and gas and mineral exploration and development, ORV use, woodland harvest, and other surface disturbing activities. Special features would lose protection.
VISUAL RESOURCES			
Visual resources maintained in majority of WSA.	Visual resources maintained in areas recommended suitable and lost in nonsuitable areas.	Same as Midrange and Preferred.	Visual resources degraded over the long-term to resource use and development.

RECREATION

Entire WSA closed to motor vehicle use. 99% of resource area would remain open to motor vehicle use. Primitive and semi-primitive nonmotorized opportunities maintained.	Same impacts as Resource Protection except 48,308 acres would be closed and 7,357 acres would remain open to motor vehicle use.	25,830 acres would be closed and 29,835 acres would remain open to motor vehicle use. Primitive and semi-primitive nonmotorized opportunities . maintained in suitable areas and lost in nonsuitable areas.	No impact to motorized recreation opportunities. Primitive and semi-primitive opportunities lost in majority of WSA over the long-term to resource use and development.

WILDLIFE

General benefit; maintenance of habitat in a natural condition. Habitats maintained include: 12,650 acres historic bighorn sheep, fair condition; 1,450 acres crucial deer winter, good condition; 22,000 acres deer yearlong, unknown condition; 5,700 acres antelope yearlong, fair condition; and essential bald eagle and other raptor habitat.	Same as Resource Protection except fewer acres of habitat maintained.	Same as Resource Protection except habitat maintained considerably reduced.	Condition of habitat reduced over the long-term to resource use and development. Wintering bald eagles and other raptors adversely affected. Opportunities to reintroduce bighorn sheep lost.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Added protection of sites due to limited resource use and development. Estimated cultural sites by type: 800 open aboriginal, 60 rock shelter, 40 historic.	Same impacts as Resource Protection except as follows: 709 open aboriginal, 56 rock shelter, 35 historic.	Same impacts as Resource Protection except as follows: 520 open aboriginal, 50 rock, 30 historic.	No additional protection provided. Cultural resources would still be protected by all applicable laws.

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE
AND WSA

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
WOODLAND PRODUCTS			
Added protection of unique woodland species (i.e. bristlecone pine). Opportunity to increase Christmas tree harvest in Wells RA by 17% foregone. Other woodland products harvesting adversely impacted.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell), but of lesser magnitude.	Same impacts as Resource Protection except opportunities to increase Christmas tree harvest enhanced.	No impacts on opportunities to harvest woodland. Unique woodland species lose added resource protection.
SOIL/WATER/AIR			
Soil, watershed and air quality generally maintained in a good condition. Total watershed maintained in its current condition includes 55,665 acres, including 5,600 acres of high erosion potential watersheds.	Some impacts as Resource Protection except as follows: 48,308 acres maintained, including 5,150 acres of high erosion potential watersheds.	Same impacts as Resource Protection except as follows: 25,830 acres maintained, including 4,400 acres of high erosion potential watersheds.	No additional resource protection for soil, water or air would be provided.
LIVESTOCK GRAZING			
Future projects may be restricted or disallowed. Potential limitations on motorized use. Costs may slightly increase.	Same impacts as Resource Protection.	Impacts would be reduced from Resource Protection.	No impacts to livestock grazing.

MINERALS

Potential negative impacts to 49 mining claims and/or parts of 9 oil and gas leases covering approximately 9,600 acres due to increased costs associated with the more restrictive regulations.

Due to withdrawl from appropriation under minerals laws, the areas with greatest potential for negative impacts are the 900 acres with high and 4,000 acres with good potential for base metals and the 900 acres with good potential for phosphates. All other minerals have low potential for occurrence in the WSA.

Same impacts as Resource Protection except as follows:

Negative impacts to 39 mining claims and 6,600 acres leased for oil and gas.

Negative impacts to 3,850 acres with good potential for base metals and phosphates.

Impacts greatly reduced as all of the high and good mineral potential, mining claims and oil and gas leases would be deleted from the wilderness boundary.

No impacts to minerals.

SOCIAL/ECONOMIC

This alternative creates the maximum impacts. Individuals in the mining sector would be adversely impacted by increased costs and foregone employment, income, and profits. These potential impacts are not expected to significantly affect the county's mining sector.

Four livestock operators would be impacted due to increased costs of operations.

Adverse impacts would occur to woodland products. The opportunity to increase the

Impacts would be the same as Resource Protection, but, reduced in magnitude.

Table 4-2 displays potential economic impacts to woodland products.

Impacts would be significantly reduced from Resource Protection, especially to minerals.

Table 4-3 displays potential economic impacts to woodland products.

No impacts to minerals, livestock grazing, or woodland products.

There are social implications and possible long-term recreation/service industry benefits that may be foregone.

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
Christmas tree harvest in the Wells RA would decline 17%. See Table 4-1. Increased sales would occur within the recreation service industry. Beneficial impacts would be small and would be to individuals in the industry.			
GOSHUTE PEAK WSA			
WILDERNESS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: Wilderness values maintained on 65,585 acres and lost on 4,185 unmanageable acres. Impacts include potential mineral development, unauthorized motor vehicle use on substantially noticeable ways, and conflicts with ROWs and corridors.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshute Peak).	Adjusting boundaries greatly reduces resource conflicts and forms a manageable area. Wilderness values maintained on 45,618 suitable acres and lost on 24,152 nonsuitable acres. Decrease in solitude opportunities by 35% reduction in size. Outstanding opportunities for solitude still present in area recommended as suitable.	Wilderness values lost to resource use and development over the long-term.

		VISUAL RESOURCES	
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
		RECREATION	
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 65,585 acres would be closed and 4,185 acres would remain open to motor vehicle use.	45,618 acres would be closed and 24,152 acres would remain open for motor vehicle use. Other impacts same as Resource Production (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
		WILDLIFE	
General benefit, maintenance of habitat in a natural condition. Habitats maintained include: 62,000 acres historic bighorn sheep, fair condition; 4,675 acres crucial deer winter, good condition; 21,500 acres deer yearlong, unknown condition; 7,000 acres antelope yearlong, fair condition and essential bald eagle and other raptor habitat.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshute Peak) except fewer acres of habitat maintained.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshute Peak) except habitat maintained considerably reduced.	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
		CULTURAL RESOURCES	
Added protection of sites due to limited resource use and development. Estimated cultural sites by type: 990 open aboriginal, 60 rock shelters, 50 historic.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshute Peak) except as follows: 895 open aboriginal, 56 rock shelter, 45 historic.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshutes Peak) except as follows: 870 open aboriginal, 50 rock shelter, 40 historic.	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE AND WSA			
ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
WOODLAND PRODUCTS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except opportunities to increase Christmas tree harvests enhanced.	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
SOIL/WATER/AIR			
Same impacts as Resource protection (Bluebell) except 69,770 acres of watershed maintained, including 572 acres with high erosion potential.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 65,585 acres of watershed maintained including 572 acres with high erosion potential.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 45,618 acres of watershed maintained, including 572 acres with high erosion potential.	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
LIVESTOCK GRAZING			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell), but, impacts would be reduced.	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
MINERALS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows:	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Goshute Peak) except as follows:	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).

Potential negative impacts to 20 mining claims and parts of 13 oil and gas leases covering approximately 12,870 acres. Other potential impacts include 5,395 acres with good mineral potential for base metals. All other minerals have low potential for occurrence in the WSA.	Potential negative impacts to 10 mining claims and 8,220 acres leased for oil and gas. 3,400 acres with good mineral potential for base metals could be impacted.		
	LANDS		
Negative impacts to two ROWs and potential corridor route.	No impacts to ROWs or corridors.	No impacts to ROWs or corridors.	No impacts to ROWs or corridors.
	SOCIAL/ECONOMIC		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Midrange and Preferred (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
	SOUTH PEQUOP		
	WILDERNESS		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: Wilderness values maintained on 37,573 acres and lost on 3,517 unmanageable acres. Impacts include potential mineral development and motor vehicle use.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (South Pequop)	Wilderness values lost to resource use and development over the long-term.	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).
	VISUAL RESOURCES		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (South Pequop).

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE
AND WSA

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
RECREATION			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 37,573 acres would be closed and 3,517 acres would remain open to motor vehicle use.	The entire WSA would remain open to motor vehicle use. Opportunities for primitive and semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation would be lost.	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).
WILDLIFE			
General benefit: maintenance of habitat in a natural condition. Habitats maintained include: 7,000 acres crucial deer winter, good condition and 8,600 acres deer yearlong, unknown condition.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (South Pequop).	Condition of habitat reduced over the long-term to resource use and development.	Same impacts as No Action (South Pequop).
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Added protection of sites due to limited resource use and development. Estimated cultural sites by type: 630 open aboriginal, 10 rock shelter and 40 historic.	Same impact as Resource Protection (South Pequop) except as follows: 575 open aboriginal, 10 rock shelter and 35 historic sites.	No additional protection provided. Cultural resources would still be protected by all applicable laws.	Same as Resource Production (South Pequop).

WOODLAND PRODUCTS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: Opportunity to increase Christmas tree harvest in Wells RA by 11 percent foregone.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell), but, impacts slightly reduced.	No impacts on opportunities to harvest woodland. Unique woodland species lose added resource protection.	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).
SOIL/WATER/AIR			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 41,090 acres of watershed maintained.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 37,573 acres of watershed maintained.	No additional protection for soil, water or air would be provided.	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).
LIVESTOCK GRAZING			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	No impacts.	No impacts.
MINERALS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: Potential negative impacts to parts of 15 oil and gas leases covering approximately 18,600 acres. Other potential impacts include 16,363 acres with good mineral potential for phosphates and 500 acres with good potential for base metals. All other minerals have low potential for occurrence in the WSA.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: Potential negative impacts to 16,600 acres leases for oil and gas, 10,620 acres with good potential for phosphates and 500 acres with good potential for base metals.	No impacts.	No impacts.

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE AND WSA

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
LANDS			
No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.
SOCIAL/ECONOMIC			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows:	Impacts would be the same as the Resource Protection (South Pequop).	Same as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same as Resource Protection (Bluebell).
The opportunities to increase the Christmas tree harvest in the Wells RA by 11% would be foregone. See Table 4-1.	Table 4-2 displays potential economic impacts to woodland products.	Table 4-3 displays potential economic impacts to woodland products.	
BAD LANDS			
WILDERNESS			
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows:	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bad Lands).	Wilderness values lost to resource use and development over the long-term.	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bad Lands).
Wilderness values maintained on 8,415 acres and lost on 1,011 unmanageable acres. Small parcels of land along the periphery of the WSA contain substantially noticeable impacts such as a			

phoneline, seeding and bladed fenceline. Other potential impacts include mineral exploration and development.			
	VISUAL RESOURCES		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).	Same impacts as No Action (Bluebell).
	RECREATION		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 8,415 acres would be closed and 1,011 acres would remain open to motor vehicle use.	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).	Same impacts as Resource Production (South Pequop).
	WILDLIFE		
General benefit: maintenance of habitat in a natural condition. Habitats maintained include: 9,426 acres historic bighorn sheep and 6,650 acres antelope summer. Designation would greatly enhance opportunities for reintroducing bighorn sheep.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bad Lands) except habitat protected to a lesser degree.	Protection of habitat and opportunities for bighorn sheep reintroduction lost.	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bad Lands).
	CULTURAL RESOURCES		
Added protection of sites due to limited resource use and development. Estimated cultural sites by type:	Sites protected include: 155 open aboriginal, 40 rock shelter, 25 historic.	No additional protection provided. Cultural resources would still be protected by all applicable laws.	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bad Lands).

IMPACT ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE
AND WSA

ALTERNATIVES			
RESOURCE PROTECTION	MIDRANGE AND PREFERRED	RESOURCE PRODUCTION	NO ACTION
	SOIL/WATER/AIR		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 9,426 acres of watershed maintained.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except 8,415 acres of watershed maintained.	No additional resource protection for soil, water or air would be provided.	Same impacts as Resource Production (Bad Lands).
	LIVESTOCK GRAZING		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell).	No impacts.	No impacts.
	MINERALS		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows:	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows:	No impacts.	No impacts.
Potential negative impacts to part of one oil and gas lease covering approximately 2,325 acres and 500 acres with good potential for base metals. All other minerals have low potential for occurrence in the WSA.	Potential negative impacts to 1,750 acres leased for oil and gas and 400 acres with good potential for base metals.		
	LANDS		
Possible relocation of a phoneline in the WSA would	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.

result in an adverse impact to the ranch it serves.			
	SOCIAL/ECONOMIC		
Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bluebell) except as follows: No impacts on woodland. Potential insignificant economic impact to the ranch served by the unauthorized phoneline.	Same impacts as Resource Protection (Bad Lands) except to a lesser degree.	No impacts.	No impacts.

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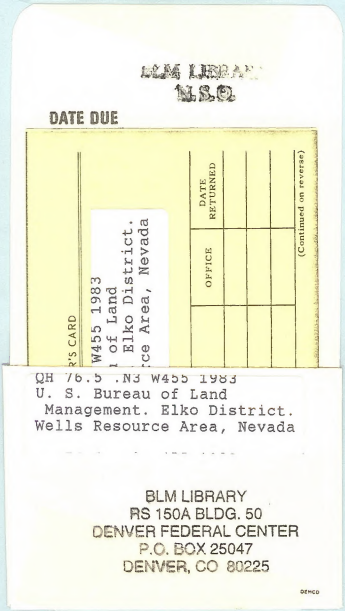
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